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Germany finances Protein Strategy until 2017

Report Categories:

Agricultural Situation

Biotechnology and Other New Production

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Policy and Program Announcements

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Report Highlights:

Domestically grown protein crops were the focus of a recent symposium hosted by the German Government. The symposium is part of the national 'Protein Strategy,' which aims to reduce Germany's dependence on soybean and soymeal imports. The Government will spend 15 million Euros until 2017 for research and demonstration networks.

General Information:

The German Government hosted a symposium titled, “Legumes-Basic Elements of Sustainable Agriculture” on October 28-29. Over 200 participants attended at the invitation of the German Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food to discuss the utilization and implementation of the German protein strategy. The event focused on research on legumes, demonstration centers in Germany and networking in Europe. The budget for the coming years was also revealed. State Secretary Dr. Robert Kloos explained that the protein strategy wants to increase the cultivation and utilization of legumes in Germany and thereby to strengthen the national and international competitiveness of these cultures. He particularly highlighted that, "these crops are important and indispensable for the design of a sustainable agriculture." He announced that a separate budget with a total of 15 million euros will finance the promotion of demonstration networks and research projects from 2014 to 2017. Dr. Hanns-Christoph Eiden, President of the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE) stressed that farmers need stronger incentives to expand cultivation and that success can only be achieved in a European context. The aim should be that legumes become more competitive.

The German Government first published a draft ‘protein strategy’ in mid June 2012 with the aim to reduce Germany’s dependence on soybean and soymeal imports. The protein strategy can be seen as an answer to an increasingly vocal public debate, led by the Green Party, local governments and several NGOs, calling for an end to all German and European soybean imports. The use of biotechnology in soybean production is a driver behind this movement. Under several policy proposals, soy imports would be replaced by domestically produced pulses and other protein crops. However, a full replacement of imported protein feeds does not appear to be a realistic option in the near term. Germany will face a number of economic and agronomic challenges to establishing large-scale plant protein production in Germany. Reaching anything near self-sufficiency would require radical changes in policy, major disruptions to established cropping practices, and shortages of displaced crops.

For more information please see GAIN reports:

[Ag Ministry publishes draft 'protein strategy'](#)

[Green Movement to End Soybean Imports – An Analysis](#)

[Agricultural Biotechnology Annual 2014](#)

[New Protein Initiative in Lower Saxony](#)